

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR (Georgian SSR)

REPORT

SUBJECT Naval Vessels, Port Facilities, and
Construction in Poti

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A five-page report on Poti, with sketches and port plan attached

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(Note: Washington distribution indicated by "X"; Field distribution by "#".)

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U.S.S.R.Economic/Naval.POTI

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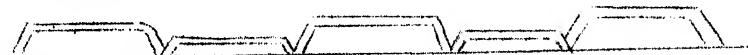
1. A foreign vessel loading manganese at POTI [redacted]

reported the following:-

Approach.

2. POTI was approached on the afternoon [redacted] It was raining and nothing was visible until the ship was seven miles off and even then only the cranes and grain silo stood out. The surrounding country had a low wasted appearance and the only noticeable coastal feature was a five span steel bridge approximately four miles North of POTI [redacted] comment: Presumably the bridge spanning the R. KHOPPI 7 miles North of POTI). From a distance the bridge looked like this:-

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3. The only distinct signal picked up by Radar at a distance was Mount OLYEN ($41^{\circ}49' E$. $42.25' N$) which showed up at 40 miles. The first indication of POTI itself was when the Grain Silo showed up at 16 miles. The contour of the Coast became visible at only 7 miles.

4. The map at Appendix 'A' shows the light bearings used on negotiating the harbour entrance. [redacted]

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Harbour Entrance.

5. There was a boom defence at the entrance consisting of two nets. The first extended from the end of W. Mole and was suspended from five buoys (see map). The second was attached to the end of the N. Mole and hung from 39

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buoys./.....

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buoys. The net was made of wire approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter forming a mesh about 18" square. The buoys were four ft. in diameter spaced about 6 ft. apart.

6. [redacted] the ship [redacted] was drawing 26 ft. 8" and it 25X1
was noticed that much mud was stirred by her passage from 550^X inside the entrance
until she was just past the entrance to the harbour. 25X1

Warships.

(a) Outer Harbour.

7. [redacted] nine Frigate type vessels were moored stern to the wall 25X1
(These Frigates were identified as 'RIGA' Escorts from illustrations.) Though
clearly moored for'ard to buoys, distance and intervening obstacles prevented
confirmation of whether they were moored astern to buoys or the quay. Only five
of these Frigates were in the outer harbour when the ship left [redacted] 25X1
There was no indication of when the other four had left.

(b) Inner Basin

8. There were altogether six Frigates in the Inner Basin together with
two "old type gunboats" and what appeared to be a new cable laying vessel being
fitted out. One of the Frigates was in a floating dock with what resembled
a target (See Appendix 'B') alongside. The remaining five Frigates, the two
gunboats and cable layer were ranged on either side of the Floating Dock. All
six frigates appeared to be undergoing repair and refit and it was noticed that
the radar scanners on all six were in various stages of dismantlement. These
scanners appeared to be of two types one of which was noticeably larger than the
other. 25X1

9. All these vessels remained in the Inner Basin [redacted]
[redacted] the only data recorded about the Frigates, other 25X1
than the fact that they closely resembled 'RIGA' escorts, was that each had one

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ranked/.....

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raked funnel and high raked bow.

10. Observer only got an end on view of the target illustrated in Appendix 'B'. Although the broadside view of the target is mainly guesswork (everything but the last few feet of the masts being concealed by the sides of the floating dock) nevertheless it was definitely established that the upper works consisted of 14 masts on three of which were fixed top marks or aerials.

Harbour Works and installations.

(a) Outer Harbour.

11. The new jetty extending from the North side of the Outer Harbour appears to have been completed. It had ordinary cement finishing, bore no cranes and seemed to have been built only as protection from the swell.

12. The new jetty extending from the South side of the Outer Harbour was not finished and showed only steel piling and no cement work. There appeared to be no activity on the quay adjacent to the moored Frigates.

13. For approximate alignment of the two new jetties see Map 'A'.

14. No cranes were seen round the Outer Harbour.

(b) Inner Basin

15. Approximately forty cranes were ranged around the three sides of the Inner Harbour and all ran on rails. They appeared to be equally divided between the ordinary luffing variety used for handling ordinary cargo and those equipped with grabs for handling ore. The grabs at the ore jetty lifted up to 10 tons. 9,000 tons of manganese was loaded in 48 hours including a break from 9 p.m. on March 10th to 8 a.m. on March 11th when the electric current for the whole of POTI failed and brought loading to a standstill. At the time of loading approximately 17 cranes were ranged along the North side of the Inner Basin.

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16. At least one 'fair size' floating crane was seen moored in the Inner Basin - no other details.

(c) Elsewhere.

17. Two tall pole wireless masts and a number of relatively shorter ones were at point 'B' on the South Mole (see Map). On three of the shorter masts were attached box aerials or beacon marks exactly similar in appearance to the three top marks or aerials seen on the naval target (q.v. paragraph 8 and Appendix 'B'). On the shore end of the South Mole was a building which could have been a wireless station.

18. A tall tower resembling a water tower was seen at point 'C' on the map. No further details.

POTI Town.

19. There were no signs of any new building in the Town or around the Dock Area. Houses and offices seemed to be built of white brick faced outside with plaster. They did not give the impression of being very strong structures.

20. Roads were earth with crushed brick finish. They lacked proper drainage and rain lay everywhere in pools.

21. The Map shows landmarks noted during a trip into Town.

Security and Shore Contacts.

22. Search was superficial. Cameras had to be declared but were returned and there appeared to be no restrictions on their use in Town as opposed to the Dock Area (see paragraph 23 below).

23. Officers and crew had to go ashore by Ferry operating from the ore jetty to the opposite side of the Inner Basin. They were not allowed to approach the warships moored at end of the Inner Basin.

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25. The local inhabitants behaved in a very friendly manner and insisted on being regarded as Georgians not Russians.

26. There was a flourishing market in second hand clothing which fetched good prices (not stated). Alcohol was the main commodity purchased with the roubles thus obtained.

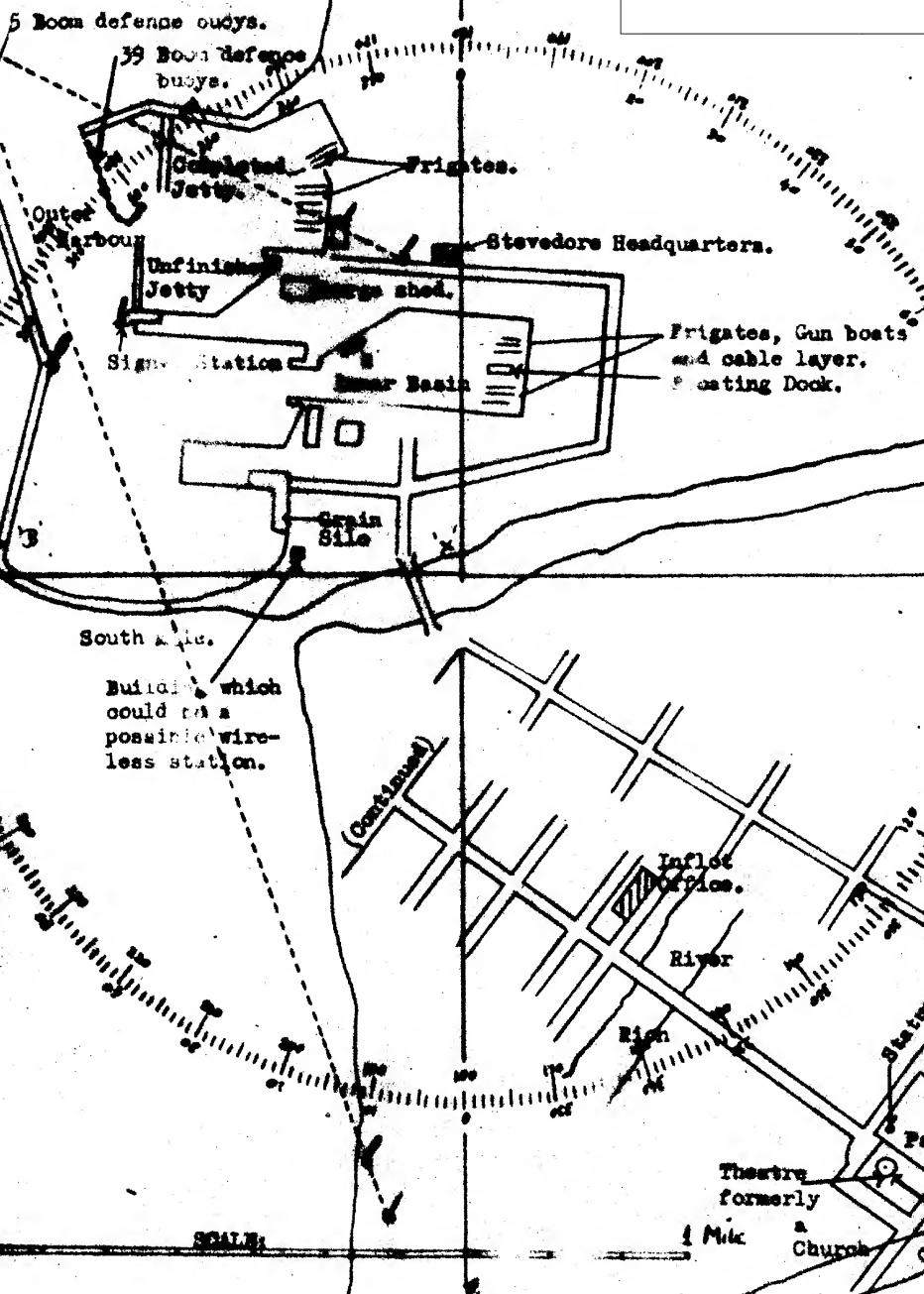
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Appendix 'A'.

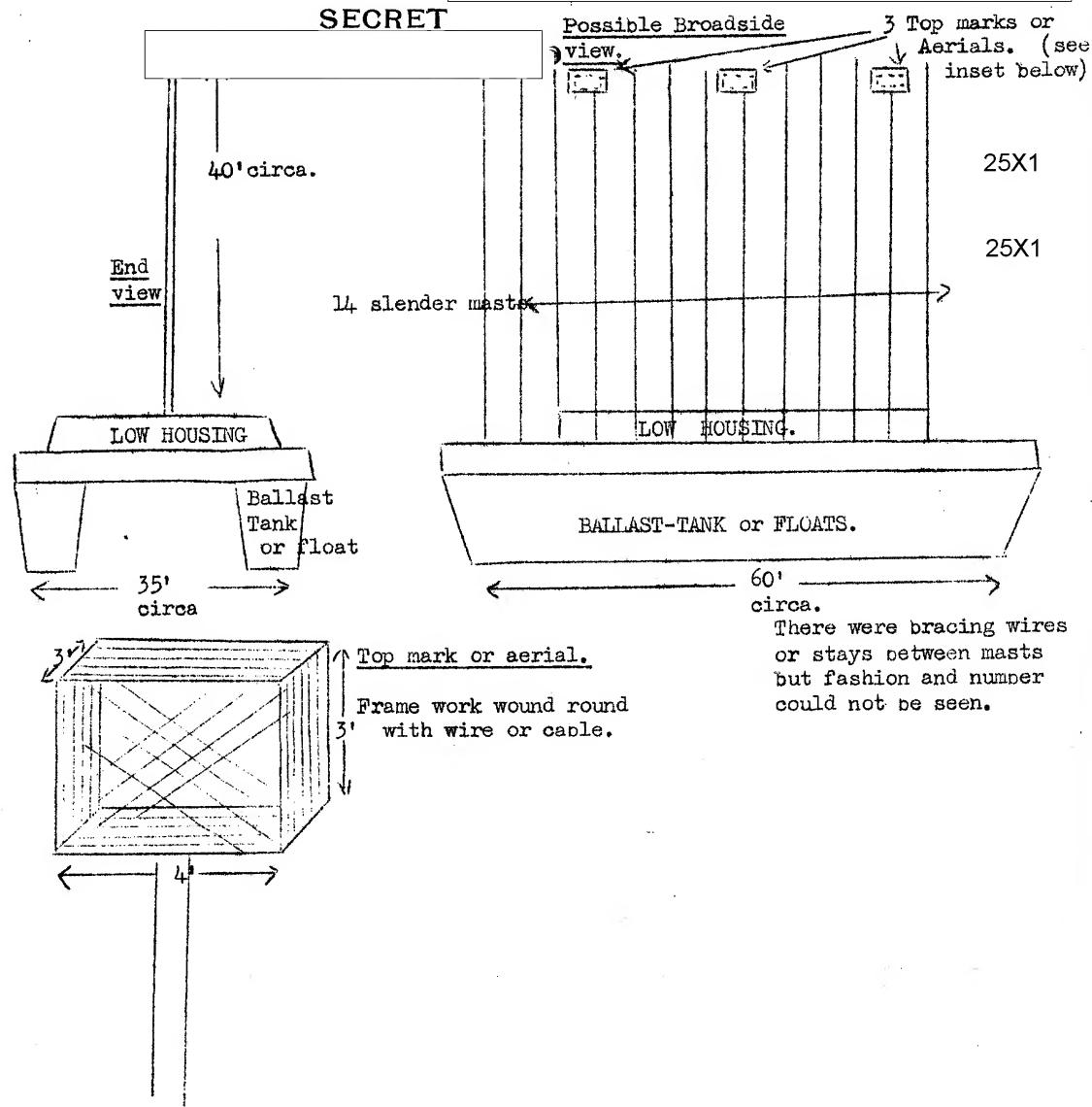
POTI 25X1

1600^X due
north of Point 'C'.

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